

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am signing Assembly Bill 1368 to ensure that law enforcement officials with specified workplace injuries are appropriately compensated for the permanent disability caused by those industries. Rebuttable presumptions have been established in law so that when certain injuries occur an impacted public safety officer is not subject to needless delays before receiving medical treatment and relevant indemnity benefits.

As I was reviewing this legislation, I was reminded of a recent media story about law enforcement officials and first-line responders who have become sick as a result of their heroic efforts to assist the people of New York City in the aftermath of September 11. Many of these individuals came from California to help their fellow Americans that day. Now, five years later, many of these people find themselves suffering from illnesses caused by the toxic substances lingering in the air.

Although the federal government has set aside some funding to help those who have become ill, I am concerned that response is not enough. So, I am directing the Division of Workers' Compensation to review California workers' compensation law to ensure that law enforcement officials and first-responders from California have access to all medical treatment necessary as a result of any illness contracted as a result of time spent helping others after 9/11.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger